

**Clark County Veteran's Resource Committee**  
**Clark County Public Service Center**  
**1300 Franklin St, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Ste #679**  
**Vancouver, Washington**  
**January 11, 2012**

**Chair: Robert Nichols**

**Vice Chair: Lou Baste**

**Secretary: Michael Gibson**

**Meeting Called to order by Lou Baste @ 1401**

**Roll Call:**      **[Bold script indicates presence at meeting]**

**POST**

40 et 8  
American Legion #14  
American Legion #27  
American Legion #44  
American Legion #168  
American Legion #176  
American Legion #189  
American Legion #208  
American Veterans #6  
DAV Chapter #4  
Marine Corps League #826  
VFW #4278  
VFW #7824  
VFW #12028  
Vietnam Vets #512

**PRIMARY**

**Jerry Keen**  
**Jerry Keesee**  
**Elisa Cotton**  
Jim Moore  
Robert Nichols  
**Michael Gibson**  
**Dick DeWald**  
George Hunt  
**Richard Alvarez**  
**Todd Boyd**  
**Lou Baste**  
**Jenny McCullough**  
Roy Billings  
**Ray Saranto**  
Greg Whitson

**Members at Large**

**Kevin Lawson**

**SECONDARY**

Jan Wojciechowski  
Karla Bean  
**Wes Forgey**  
Darren Wertz  
Mark Woods  
Roxeanne Boose  
Don Taylor  
**Bob Blevins**  
Richard Gabriel  
Roxeanne Boose  
**Ron Brandon**  
Gary Dowler  
Richard Alvarez  
**Skip Benge**

**CLARK COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES**

**Pete Munroe, Rebecca Royce, Vanessa Gaston**

**GUESTS**

**Youri Archer – CRMHS; Odis Warren – VVA 512; Thomas Dombeck – 40 et 8**

**Meeting Minutes:** Ray Saranto made a correction to the December 14, 2011, minutes. Under Old Business, Ron Brandon asked to be removed from the Appeals Committee, not the Policy and Procedures Committee. Jerry Keen motioned to approve the minutes with the correction. Motion seconded by Ray Saranto and passed. [Editor's note: Correction was made.]

**Department of Community Services Update**

Vanessa Gaston, director of Community Services (DCS), discussed changes that will be taking place with the department. She explained that currently the department has a \$64 million budget and 96 staff members that provide oversight and services for 100 Clark County providers. Programs include: mental VRC

health, substance abuse, developmental disabilities, affordable housing, homelessness, housing preservation, weatherization, youth services and veterans services. Vanessa also explained that she has been with the department as director for four years and is a veteran herself. Due to budget cuts, the County is looking at new ways to be more efficient and is currently undergoing a reconfiguration process, including a review of all services to see if they should continue to be provided by the County. Within DCS there is a staff committee to look at the changes for our department.

The first major change for DCS is moving the Weatherization Program to the Department of Community Development (DCD). Several staff members will be moving to their new department next week. Another major change will include the Regional Support Network (RSN) which provides mental health services. The State is mandating a reduction in the number of RSNs in the state from 13 to six. Clark County is working with Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and Skamania counties to merge the RSN programs into one and will no longer be a part of the County. This equates to a \$32 million and 20 staff member reduction to DCS. Other changes include loss of services in the Substance Abuse program and changes to Medicaid services due to Healthcare Reform.

Vanessa mentioned that there shouldn't be any changes to the veterans' program at DCS, however she is working on incorporating veterans into the other services that are provided by the department.

#### 2012 Membership

Rebecca mentioned that, as of today, all posts have submitted their 2012 Letter of Appointment. She also explained that, per the discussion at the December meeting, no Member at Large may be a member of any active post already represented on the committee. Rebecca verified before the meeting that Kevin Lawson was the only Member at Large requesting to be on the committee and asked for a motion for his acceptance into the committee. Richard Alvarez motioned to approve Kevin Lawson as a Member at Large, seconded by Jenny McCullough and approved.

#### Committee Assignments

Mike Gibson read a list of the committees and their 2011 members and asked for volunteers. The following is a list of each committee and their 2012 members. All committees will need to meet and elect the chair of their respective committee.

- ♦ Strategic Plan: Ray Saranto, Elisa Cotton and Todd Boyd
- ♦ Budget: Lou Baste, Bob Nichols, Mike Gibson and Jerry Keen
- ♦ Policy & Procedures/By-laws: Jerry Keen, Ray Saranto, Mike Gibson, Bob Nichols and Greg Whitson
- ♦ Appeals: Ray Saranto, Elisa Cotton, Mike Gibson, Bob Nichols and Todd Boyd
- ♦ Nominations: Bob Nichols, Richard Alvarez and Todd Boyd

#### Committee Reports

**Appeals:** Ray Saranto mentioned that there were two appeals since the last meeting; both approved.

**Contractor Reports:** Pete Munroe reviewed the November reports. CRMHS served 119 veterans for \$35,931. Most services were for food, transportation and utility assistance.

The Veterans Assistance Center served 63 veterans in November and had 21 volunteers giving 763 hours to the Center.

Pete also discussed the dental service report. Thirteen veterans received services with a value of \$6,750, but only \$844 was charged to the VAF.

Finally, Pete mentioned the VAF balance at the end of November was \$779,552.

#### **Old Business:**

There was no old business discussed.

#### **New Business:**

Jerry Keen recommended that the committee ask the Board of County Commissioners for an increase in the VAF levy. He understands that Commissioner Mielke is not in favor of increasing taxes, but Jerry believes he might be in favor of re-allocating funds from another program. Ray recommended this be a task of the Budget Committee. Pete recommended this be started as soon as possible since the County starts working on the next year's budget early in the current year.

#### **Open Forum:**

- ♦ Jerry Keen and Odis Warren gave an update on Bob's condition. Odis mentioned that Bob's doctor said he is slowly improving, but will be in recovery for several months. Bob still has some fluid in his lungs, but should be taken off the ventilator tomorrow.
- ♦ Pete distributed some postcards for the VAC and other posts to hand out regarding the Earned Income Tax Credit that households who are low-income can apply for when filing their taxes.
- ♦ Ron Brandon asked for clarification on Primary/Secondary rights as it pertains to attendance at the meeting. Rebecca clarified that she logs each posts attendance at the meetings and if they have three consecutive unexcused absences from the meetings they will be removed from the committee. If a Secondary Representative is concerned about the attendance of their own Primary Rep, they need to take that to their post for discussion.
- ♦ Jerry Keesee informed the VRC that the Project Homeless Connect will be held on Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup> from 1000 to 1500 hours. The event will be at the Living Water Community Church located at 2901 NE 65<sup>th</sup> Ave in Vancouver. Jerry Keen mentioned that the VAC is hosting a table at the event.

**Meeting adjourned at 1447 hours.**

**Next meeting: February 8, 2012 at 1400 hours.**